1:Du,Bola E-5 (1938-1939) 1944
GFS Alor GFS

§91 theoretically, residence is patrilocal. In almost, yet there are several instances in which it is matrilocal. Theoretically too, the brothers of the family form the powerful or senior in-group and live around a common dance place as a lineage complex. Actually, brothers who cannot get along amicably will scatter. For example, Manikoi of Dikiapa, as the oldest brother, lived on his lineage dance plaza in New Dikiapa, the second brother lived on the dance place of Old Dikiapa, the third had moved to the offspring hamlet of Dikiapa called Malyamaang, and their two half brothers, by the same father but a different mother, lived at opposite ends of their mother's village of Arimelang. This example is not important in itself, but it does illustrate nicely the flexibility of residence that exists in practice. It can of course be balanced by several instances in which brothers follow the traditional pattern. Expediency and interpersonal relationships outweigh theory and distant consequences.

§92 Expediency and the industry of the child also determine the inheritance of land; a child is usually given a garden plot as soon as he is old enough to work productively. Both men and women own fields inherited from their fathers or mothers.

§93 Dry rice is in all probability the oldest staple of the area, but at present maize has replaced it as the daily food and rice is reserved largely for feasts. There is a local belief that "rice makes you fat and corn makes you strong." A fat body is the criterion of health. In addition to rice and corn there is a large range of other foods, including millet, beans, swiss potatoes, cassava, taro, and a wide variety of tubers. Fruits include oranges, mangoes, papayas, breadfruit, jack fruit, and many kinds of bananas.

§94 Theoretically, women are responsible for the cultivation and collection of all vegetable foods, and theory is reinforced by giving them §95 every chip of all plant products, regardless of the land and labor men may have invested in its production. Men, on the other hand, control §96 the financial system and the three currencies through which it operates — pigs, gongs, and coral bracelets called makau. Arrows too are used for money but only as small change. The monetary value of pigs §97 is highly inflated in relation to their consumption value. Their flesh is §98 rarely eaten except at feasts, in order that their value may be added to the interminable and complex monetary accounting that is basic to ceremonial procedure. In fact, should a pig be killed accidentally, a ceremonial feast of one sort or another is improvised to justify its consumption.

§99 Of the three currencies, makau are undoubtedly the coin of the realm. They range through unequal steps from the value of one cupiah

The result of events in which
distributed in the women but only in terms of the males in their house-
hold. That is, women get meat for their husbands and sons but not for
themselves or their daughters. This is consistent with the theory that
flesh food is the property of men. Since hearts are primarily occasions
for food distribution and actual consumption is at home, women do get
a share, but only as dependents of the men. Also, since meat is eaten
primarily in connection with feasts or sacrifices and is definitely a treat,
the way is open for it to become set in children's minds as a symbol of
masculine prerogative. The system of meat distribution helps to rein-
force early in life, and on a very basic level, the role of masculine prestige
in the culture. Men are not the providers; in fact, they are quite
the contrary. They are the ones provided for, but they are also the
purveyors of a delicacy.

The girl, then, is set during early childhood in the essential and intimate relationship to the food cycle that she will follow all her life. Yet no girl who is unmarried may make a contribution in her own name to food displays, even though she may have grown and prepared some of the food that is brought in her mother's name. This means that she may be assuming adult responsibilities without receiving adult recognitions. It is worth noting in this connection that public food contributions are the symbol of female adulthood.

The following condensed version of an Alorese tale illustrates nicely the role of the sexes, and especially of the mother-son relationship, in the matter of food. Here the young men appear demanding and ungrateful, while the woman vacillates between being a gratifying and a frustrating figure.

Story of the Wasteful Sons

Two brothers went to work in their garden and their mother cooked food for them to take along. When they came home they said, "Our friends have finished the food. It would be nice to cook more." So the mother cooked more food and took it to them in the garden. Part of the food they ate, part they spilled. [The meaning is that in carrying the food to their mouths with a coconut-shell spoon they were careless and let a portion fall to the ground.] In the evening they again asked their mother to cook food for them to take to the fields. They took the food and again ate part and spilled part. Then they ran home to their mother, saying, "Mother, we are sick; therefore cook us millet." The mother put the husk of their youngest brother in the pot of millet she cooked for them.

When the brothers entered the house, they smelled husk and refused

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stake. With that in hand he could begin to accumulate a new bride-price, by lending it at interest to Malimi. Thereby he would be one step nearer to buying the girl on whom his heart somewhile had become set. These financial transactions must have been highly frustrating to Amenya and the girl whom he wished to marry. They also gave rise to, or were the means of expressing, hostility between a father and son, and they laid the rejected girl open to a good deal of sly teasing from young men about her desirability and the reason for her marriage to an older man.

Sesibike's experiences in trying to break into financial life were perhaps even more frustrating and discouraging than those of Amenya. When he was about fourteen or fifteen, he had spent a season working hard in his and his parents' gardens. After a good maize harvest had been tied into bundles and stored in the loft, his parents, partly to reward him and partly to start him on his financial career, gave him a piglet. Sesibike devoted himself to its care. He kept it penned and gathered food to fatten it rapidly. When it was worth a five-dollar stake, instead of allowing Sesibike to contribute it to a fund for a return payment in cattle, his father confiscated it for one of his own death feasts, saying it was Sesibike's duty to contribute to their family ceremonies.

Sesibike was furious but helpless. He swore he would never again raise pigs, a vow that he kept stubbornly for years. Meanwhile his father died, but there was an older brother who had to buy a wife first. When I knew Sesibike he was twenty-six, still unmarried, and as sensitive on that score as all boys in Asimolang. For a young man of his age to be unmarried is considered even more of a social disability than for a debutante who has been out ten years. Luckily Sesibike was a good boxmaker and the salary he received from me permitted him to buy a stake cattle from a coastal man who was pressed for tax money and to acquire a couple of pigs. The special inducement for launching once more on a financial career was a girl from Kariwa with whom he had fallen in love. He contributed his pigs as dowry payments on some female kin and expected the higher bride-price in return. However, he lost his stake cattle to interest to Malimi, the same financier who figured in the previous anecdote and one consistently skilled in financial chicanery.

To add to Sesibike's difficulties his future brothers-in-law were planning a large death feast for their father. They counted on their sister's bride-price as one of the chief sources of income for the event. Night after night when Sesibike went to see the girl, her kin berated him for his slowness in paying his bride-price and threatened to sell their sister to another man. They even demanded that he pay the whole

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[159] next the older men called us all again to go to Maruwaing, where the dead man had kin. I said, "Yesterday I fell. Today I had better stay and beat gongs. You can go." I and my friends stayed home; the older men went to Maruwaing, where they were given a goat. They were going to save the goat for four days for the Hevelakang feast, but the goat went crazy and butted me in the stomach. Therefore the older people decided to kill it the next day for the Hevelaberka feast. They were afraid it might kill a child. For the Hevelakang they used only a small pig. Father went to Meingfui with a large gong as a dowry, and they gave him a big pig as a bride-price. Four men carried it back. They saved the pig for the Rolik feast three months later. Father gave a big feast at that time; thirty gongs and makos came in.

In two months Tilapada, my maternal grandmother, died. People came to call mother and told her that her mother had defecated in her loincloth and didn't drink any more. So mother went. Her mother wouldn't swallow food. She died. They carried her to Dikimpe. Her other children [stepchildren], Manifani, Langmani, and Lakamau, said she had to be buried with the Senhiera lineage of her husband. But father said, "She can be buried with either the Senhiera or with her own lineage, the Maughiera, either above or below the village." Then Tilapada came back to life and said, "No, I must return to my fathers; bury me with the Maughiera. I can also be buried with Senhiera, but my Senhiera children have bad voices and talk roughly. Better bury me with the Maughiera." So they carried her to her father's house. That night Manifani spoke to her, "Mother, it is now the hungry season. Think of me if I go to ask people for food for your feasts. People won't give it to me." [He was asking his mother to send her soul with him to give him luck in raising the necessary death feast provisions.] But she didn't speak to him. She just groaned. Then father talked to her, "Mother, at present there is neither corn, nor beans, nor rice. I don't have gongs or makos either. Think of me." So she said, "Oh, your gongs and makos are many. You will have no trouble. You will also be given food. Now the people of Sebiek [village of the dead] want me to go. But you will have no trouble." Then she died. Father went to get food, gongs, and makos. He had to speak once only and people gave him what he asked for. But Manifani and his brothers got nothing. They didn't make a feast for their mother. Only father did.

[160] [161] [162] At the time we were making Tilapada's feasts, father told me to go ask our various kin for pigs, and if they didn't give them, just to shoot the pigs in their pen; he would pay for them later on. I saw that Atuka-

2: DuBois E-5 (1938-1939) 1941 OFS Alor OFS

source of food. The rats are often roasted on the spot, and the children are given the bellies, entrails, and other less choice portions of the kill. In any event the day's food is so precariously and inconsistently procured no discipline is administered. Further, the food secured is the less choice kind which may, in conjunction with many other attitudes, help to produce in the child, the feeling of being undervalued.

As compared with this free play group period for boys, there is a slightly different adjustment for girls. Their play period is neither so long nor so free. They are more closely attached to their mothers, have more rigorous training in their adult role as providers for the family. They go out to work in the fields with their mothers and have therefor more regular access to food. I know of no cases in which little girls have been accused of pilfering from gardens, whereas such charges give rise to frequent if minor frictions with boys. On the other hand a girl does not have the guest privilege of the small boy. She gets no tidbits during butchering unless an unusually indulgent and thoughtful male kin happens to notice her on the edge of the group and gives her a bit of meat. Similarly, the meat at feasts is always distributed to the women but only in terms of the males in their household. That is, women get meat for their husbands and sons, but not for themselves or their daughters. Since food is taken home and eaten there, the women naturally get a share, but only as dependents of men. Also, since meat is eaten only in connection with a feast and is definitely a "treat," it becomes set in the children's minds as a symbol of masculine prestige. This coincides with theories of property which grant men the ownership of all flesh food as opposed to women who own the vegetable foods. The system of meat distribution at feasts helps to reinforce early in life and on a very basic level the role of masculine prestige in the culture. It is not that men are the providers; in fact they are quite the contrary. They are the ones provided for; yet they are the purveyors of a delicacy.

The girl, then is set during the preadolescent years in the essential and intimate relationship to the food cycle which she will follow all her life. Further, she has more systematic and deliberate training than boys in the role of adult existence. There is no sharp break in her life except the change of residence at marriage. It is significant that only after marriage is she allowed to make, independently of her mother, a food contribution to a feast. Public food contributions are the symbol of female adulthood.

Boys find themselves undervalued in comparison to men. Girls are valued in much the same terms as the adult women. Their role will always be somewhat underprivileged, but at least they do not experience the same marked discrepancy between childhood and the adult role expected of them as the boys do. The adolescent boy has a sudden adjustment to make and there are no crisis rites, no initiation ceremonies to help him. His change is not institutionalized or dramatized, and certainly he gets no direct education in it. At about fifteen he begins to ponder the purchase of a wife and that means entering upon the whole complex financial game which is the man's chief labor and honorific occupation. In the course of a few months he drifts away from the play groups, becomes a much more solitary figure, and interestingly enough often insists at this time on a midday meal, even if he must cook for himself.